WHAT CAME TO WINIFRED

ELIZABETH·WESTYN·TIMLOW

— Linda Jaffrey —

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WHAT CAME TO WINIFRED

BY

ELIZABETH WESTYN TIMLOW

AUTHOR OF "CRICKET," "CRICKET AT THE SEASHORE," "EUNICE AND CRICKET," "DOROTHY DOT," ETC.

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ETHELDRED B. BARRY

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TO

Marguerite

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WHAT CAME TO WINIFRED

CHAPTER I.

"FATHER," said Winifred, nestling closer to his side, at the beginning of their usual after-dinner talk, "I have something very important to tell you."

"What dreadful thing have you been doing, sweetheart?" laughed Mr. Dent; "your classic brow is all in puckers."

"I'm very serious, father, really," answered Winifred. "I hope you won't mind much. You know what I've wanted, oh! more than anything in the world, 'cept you," with a parenthetical hug, "don't you, father?"

"Yes; jam for your bread and butter," answered Mr. Dent, promptly. "That is, jam *to-day*. You know, like Alice, you always have jam yesterday and jam to-morrow, but never jam to-day."

"Don't tease, father. I'm *serious*, and I want to tell you *so* much," said Winifred, her eyes shining like fireflies. "Just guess. I'll give you one more chance. What do I want more than anything else?"

"Except me?"

"Yes, of course, you teasy father."

"Well, then — a piano?"

"Yes," nodded Winifred. "Course you know *how* I want a piano."

A sad little look crept into her father's eyes, but he laughed gaily.

"So I've heard you remark, and you know *how* I want to give you one, my pet, if only —"

"I know," put in Winifred, quickly. "Times are so hard. Seems to me times always *have* been hard, father," she added, in her old-fashioned way.

Mr. Dent nodded with a little sigh; then he said, cheerily:

"They'll be better sometime, dear. Some day people will buy my books, and then we'll go and live in a little cottage all by ourselves, and we'll have a little maid with a white cap, and a pony-cart, and we'll buy pretty things — and a piano."

"Oh, a piano!" Winifred cried, clapping her hands. "And I'll take lessons and be a great musician, and support you, father dear, when you're a lovely old

white-haired gentleman," and Winifred lovingly stroked the dark hair, already streaked with gray.

Her father laughed, and sighed again.

"And we'll have beautiful times!" went on Winifred, eagerly. "We'll always have cream for our oatmeal, and we'll go and hear music whenever we like, and we won't take 'stand up seats' either, will we? But we *do* have nice times now, father, you and I, don't we?" she added, quickly, lest her father should think she was discontented.

"Indeed we do, little daughter. But I do believe you've forgotten the weighty secret, while we've been building up our estates in Spain."

"Why, I 'most did!" cried Winifred, merrily. "Well, now, father, I *hope* you won't mind. I went out one day last winter all by myself, on Fifth Avenue, and I went into the piano stores and asked about pianos. I didn't know they cost such a lot, did you? They cost three hundred dollars, and some of them a *thousand dollars!* Think of that!"

"Yes, little maid, I knew."

"But, father, I found one that had been used a little, and the man said it was pretty good, and he said I could have that one for one hundred and fifty dollars. Think of *that!*"

"Yes," said her father, thinking that one hundred

and fifty dollars were quite as unattainable just then as one thousand.

"Of course," went on Winifred, reflectively, "I knew that we *never* could spare one hundred and fifty dollars right out, so I just thought I'd try and earn some money my own self, and I did, and that's the secret!" and Winifred dived into her pocket. "See, father!" and she waved ten crisp, new one-dollar bills before his astonished eyes.

"You wonderful child!" and Winifred disappeared in one of her father's bear-hugs. "How in the name of wonder —"

"All by myself!" cried Winifred, triumphantly, emerging very tumbled as to her hair and very shining as to her eyes. "And I've been doing it ever since last winter!"

"May I ask what?" requested Mr. Dent, very deferentially.

"Course you may. This is just for a starter. Oh, I know it's very little, but it will all count up, you know. I've been calculating, father. It's taken me only three months to earn ten dollars, and that would be forty dollars a year, and forty goes into a hundred and fifty pretty nearly four times, so it will only take me not quite four years to earn a piano. Prob'ly not as long as that, for I'll put in my Christmas dollar,

of course, each year. And perhaps I can earn a little faster when I am older. And then I'll have my piano before I'm fifteen years old, you see!" and Winifred clapped her hands excitedly.

Mr. Dent shaded his eyes with his hands a moment before he spoke.

"That will be fine, little daughter. But *how* was the wonderful money earned? I'm dying to know."

"Oh, I forgot! Well, I don't really think it was earned at all, father, for it was only just play, after all. You know how I often take care of little Emily for Mrs. Adams down-stairs? 'Bout Christmas time, when they were all so busy, I thought I'd make a business of it," Winifred explained, with her most practical air. "So I asked Mrs. Mott and Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Harris if they wouldn't like me to amuse their babies regularly every day, or when they went out, or their girl was busy, and they all said they did, and they'd pay me ten cents an hour. Just think of that! So I've 'mused them ever so many times. Sometimes I'd bring them all up here together in the morning, and sometimes I'd go down-stairs to their rooms, just as it happened. I put all my ten centses in my bank, and yesterday I opened it and counted it, because it was so full, and I found I had ten dollars! I told Mrs. Adams, for I'd told them all what I wanted the money

for, and she had her husband take the silver to the bank, and he brought me home all these, because he said it looked so much more than one ten-dollar bill."

And Winifred, breathless and exultant, waved them around her head.

"Isn't that a good beginning, father dear?"

"My precious little daughter!" said Mr. Dent, after a long pause, during which Winifred was held in another close embrace. "Father doesn't know what to say. You are the bravest little girl that ever was, to do this so persistently. Did you never get tired?"

"Sometimes," confessed Winifred, honestly. "But generally I didn't mind," she added, cheerily; "for once in awhile I get a little bit lonesome when you are gone, and I was glad to have the children for company."

"My poor little girl," said her father, pitifully, stroking her bright, soft hair.

"Not *poor* with you and ten dollars," protested Winifred, clasping both her treasures tighter.

Winifred and her father lived all by themselves in one of the tiny studio flats in Tenth Street, in New York. Mr. Dent was, his friends said, a yet unappreciated genius, for his books had not taken the public by storm. Still they had a quiet, steady sale, that kept them in simple comfort, and his publishers said

he was certainly growing in popularity, and confidently predicted a brilliant future for him. It seemed long in coming, though, and sometimes Mr. Dent felt that he could not endure the waiting, and let Winifred grow up without the pleasures and advantages that a child of her age needed.

Winifred was only eleven, but womanly and quaint, through being always her father's constant companion. She was a cheery, sweet little soul, — "father's sunshine," as he loved to call her. She only dimly remembered her mother, but she knew every line of that dear, beautiful face, so exquisitely painted, that smiled down on them from the wall, and her father talked of her so constantly that Winifred always felt her mother was still a living presence with them.

Winifred was the housekeeper, also, and for two years had taken nearly all the care of the tiny rooms. A woman came in once a week to sweep and clean thoroughly and do the laundry work, but as for the rest, Winifred's nimble fingers accomplished it all. She and papa together prepared their simple breakfast of fruit, cereal, coffee, and rolls. Then she made the beds, and dusted the rooms, and put the kitchen in order. She was also learning to do her own mending and her father's, and altogether she was the

gayest, happiest little housekeeper in all the great city.

For a year or two past her father had been busy on a historical novel of old New York, which required much research both of localities and in books. Therefore he went to the library every morning about ten o'clock, and read and wrote there till about four, taking a sandwich with him by way of luncheon. His return was Winifred's gala-time, for then his work was over for the present, and she had her father all to herself. He heard her lessons, which Winifred had conscientiously prepared, — and she loved her lessons. Her father spoke French like a native, for he had lived in Paris several years when a lad, and he was teaching his little daughter the language. She read and understood it very well, already, and her father was now engaged in polishing up her accent, as he said. Then she studied Latin and history. The history was studied, I must confess, in a very hop-skip-and-jump way, for they would spend a few weeks on any epoch or in any land that attracted them, and then they would whisk over to any other country or age that some chance allusion led them to. It was a very delightful way, though, if not very methodical. Arithmetic, I regret to say, was relegated to the background. Winifred had certainly known

her multiplication table once on a time, and she could do all the problems that their simple housekeeping involved, without any very great exertion of intellect, but I am afraid this bounded her arithmetical knowledge.

Recitation-time lasted till they were both tired, and whenever that occurred they put on their things and went to walk. The walk always ended with dinner somewhere, for they found all sorts of queer little restaurants, French or Italian, and would gaily experiment on new dishes.

Then they would go home, and after that came the long confidential talks in the dusk, in which Winifred's soul delighted. She would sit nestled in her father's arms, by the window, where the curtains were drawn up as high as they would go, and watch the street and the hurrying people, and the shadows on the opposite window curtains.

Then they would talk. *How* they would talk! Her father would tell Winifred how his plot was coming on and just what the characters had done and said to-day, and what they would probably do and say to-morrow. Winifred would listen, and criticise, and approve or frown. Sometimes she would cry out decidedly that they *must* not do this or that, sometimes she would have some wise, quaint suggestion

to make in an important situation, and sometimes she would turn her face to her father's shoulder, and weep a few little tears over the sorrows or distresses of her favourite heroines. Winifred knew little of the children's books of the day, but Dickens and Scott were already her loved companions. Maggie Tulliver was a real personage to her. "Villette" she had cried over many a time. Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome" she could repeat by the page. "Paradise Lost" she would declaim by the hour, for she loved the roll of the stately verse. Shakespeare, also, she was lately beginning to read and enjoy, and as for Dante's "Inferno," she would pore for hours in fascinated horror over the beautiful edition, illustrated by Doré, which was one of her father's choice possessions.

Her mind being thus drenched with good literature, and knowing no other, she was, with her natural quick intelligence, a critic not to be despised. Her father, smiling, often called her his "little collaborator."

At nine o'clock Winifred went to bed, and her father, after cosily tucking her in, settled himself at his desk for another three hours' work.

Winifred's deep and abiding desire was for a piano. Her soul was full of music and she felt its vibra-

tions to her finger-tips. Long ago, some one had given her a doll's piano, that had been her delight through all her childhood. Now, as she grew older, she put it to a practical use, for she had the resolution daily to sit down before it, on the floor, and practise five-finger exercises by the hour. This was to get her fingers in good condition, when her piano came, for Winifred was serenely sure that the coveted possession would be hers one day. "I must be ready for it," she always said. Their neighbour, Mrs. Adams, gave music lessons, and would often play for the little girl, who would stand absolutely motionless beside her, as long as she touched the keys. Not a gesture or a motion escaped Winifred's watching eyes, and she would try to imitate the fingering on her little make-believe piano later.

Yet so thoughtful was this brave little girl, and so afraid lest her father should think she was discontented or unhappy because she did not have a piano, that she seldom talked much about it; and he really had no idea how deep the longing for a piano had taken root. The simple story of her determination to earn money for it herself was a real revelation to him. His heart ached fiercely, as it always did when the knowledge of one of her few wants came to him, and he could not gratify it.

"I *must* manage it," he thought. "But how?" So closely must the dollars be counted, that even renting a piano was out of the question.

"You shall have one in some way, my May-blossom," he said, aloud, after a silence. "We must think up ways and means. If we had fairy godmothers nowadays, sweetheart, we might have one for a birthday present," he added, more lightly.

"It's pretty nearly my birthday," said Winifred, meditatively, for she was born on May-day.

"If we were living in Boston now, you might, at any rate, get a May-basket," said her father.

"I'd love to get a May-basket," said Winifred. "Tell me about them."

She had heard the story often enough, before, but she never tired of it. Knowing so little of real child-life in her own short experience, her father's merry tales of his boyhood seemed like a fairy story to his little daughter. So now he told, as he had many times before, how he and her mother had lived next door to each other in Boston when they were children, and how on May-day night came this May-basket excitement. The May-baskets were pretty tissue-paper affairs, gay with gilt paper and ribbons, and filled with candy and flowers. The children of a neighbourhood would assemble just at dusk, and, with much

excitement and hustling and tiptoeing, make their way to the home of the girl or boy who was to be thus favoured. The May-basket was hung on the door-knob with the name of the recipient on a card tied to it. They would then pull the bell vigorously, and all scamper away. Then her father always described, with great unction, how the fortunate recipient would dart out to find the merry donors, who were lurking around the corners and in dark places, and how when they were all caught they would be invited into the house for an hour of games.

"Oh, what jolly times boys and girls used to have!" Winifred sighed for very enjoyment of her father's racy descriptions. "How I would like a May-basket! I mean, of course, if we lived in Boston," she added, hastily, for fear of hurting her father's feelings. "It wouldn't be the same in New York, would it? Do they hang them now, father?"

"I can't say, sweetheart. But I do know it's nine o'clock. Time honest folks were in bed, and rogues at work. So be off with you, little daughter, and call me when you're ready to be tucked in."

Obedient Winifred slipped at once to the floor, after a prodigious hug and kiss. At the door she hesitated a moment, then flew back.

"Father," she whispered, wistfully, with her arms about his neck, and her lips at his ears, "do you think I might pray about a piano? I do want it *so!*"

"To be sure you may, darling," said her father, much touched. "Praying and working together accomplish mighty results, and we'll do both. Be very sure, little daughter, if it is the right thing for us, it will come." And Winifred, much comforted, betook herself off.

An hour later, as Mr. Dent sat driving his pen, scratch, scratch over the paper, a tap came at his door. He opened it to find Mrs. Adams, who occupied the flat below them, standing there.

"Is the little maid asleep?" she asked, cautiously, as she entered. "I don't want her to hear what I have to say."

"She is safe in the Land of Nod," said Mr. Dent, wheeling forward a chair. "Now what can I do for Mrs. Adams?"

"Listen to what she has to say," answered the little lady, laughing. "And I'll begin in the middle to save time. Do you know we have a real musical genius in that little daughter of yours?" plunging, as she said, directly into her subject. "She has the keenest sensibility of music I ever saw in a child. I

have told her to come to my room and drum on my piano whenever she feels like it, if I am out. She rarely comes, though, for she has such a dread of obtruding. Still I have overheard her, sometimes, improvising the sweetest little things. Yesterday I asked her where she had learned something she was playing, and she answered, surprised, 'Just out of my fingers.' And this morning I came in here and found her carefully practising scales, first with one hand and then with the other. It was absolutely pathetic."

"Indeed, you cannot feel any more strongly than I do about it, Mrs. Adams," Mr. Dent returned, his intense feeling giving his courteous manner a touch of impatience. "It is most humiliating, however, to confess one's limitations. I am, at present, perfectly helpless about it. Later, I hope —"

Mrs. Adams interrupted him impulsively.

"There is a way, fortunately, if you are willing. Listen. To-day the mother of one of my pupils told me they were unexpectedly going abroad, for a year certainly, perhaps indefinitely. They have a fine new Chickering piano. She offered me the use of it for its storage during the time. Now, I have a new piano, but I immediately thought of your Winifred. I told the lady all about her, and she was rejoiced at the thought of the piano coming where it would be

such a genuine delight. Winifred can have it for the year, certainly, and if the people decide to remain abroad, it can be bought at a low figure. Will you have it? It will be simply the expense of moving it here."

Mr. Dent could hardly speak.

"You are certainly her fairy godmother," he said, after a few moments. "Winifred, dear little soul, will think this is a direct answer to her prayers," and he detailed the conversation of the evening.

"I fully agree with Winifred," Mrs. Adams answered, earnestly. "When a person prays for a thing, and then works for it as fearlessly and persistently as dear little Winifred, it is pretty sure to come. Well, these people leave the first of May, and you can have the piano on that day, if you wish it."

"The first of May!" echoed Mr. Dent. "What a fortunate coincidence! Now Winifred can have her May-basket!"

"Of course she shall!" cried Mrs. Adams, eagerly. She had been a New England girl herself, and had enjoyed many a May-day frolic.

"A piano is rather an ungainly object to decorate," she went on, gaily, much amused by the idea, but entering merrily into the spirit of the thing. "Let me see. I have several rolls of crêpe paper that were

bestowed on me the other day. We'll get up Winifred's piano in fine style. I'll get Mrs. Mott to take her out of the way somewhere while the piano arrives."

"Just the thing!" laughed Mr. Dent, boyishly, for he loved a frolic still. "And I'll get her some candy to go with it — it wouldn't be a May-basket without candy —"

"And flowers," added Mrs. Adams; "I'll bring some flowers."

"Dear little patient soul! how divinely happy she will be!" said her father, softly, with infinite tenderness in his tones. Then he added, lightly, "I suspect I'll never have a button on my shirts, if my little maid turns into a Cecilia."

"Ah, that reminds me!" cried Mrs. Adams, quickly. "I am determined to do myself the pleasure of giving Winifred music lessons, if you will kindly let me. It will be simply fascinating to teach such a little enthusiast, after the dull, stupid pupils I struggle with, day after day. Indeed, don't speak of it as a favour. It will be a delight. Besides, Winifred often looks after Emily, if I am out, or my maid is busy, so the account is entirely balanced. Good night. We will arrange further details to-morrow."

Three days later, Winifred, who had had a lovely trip to Central Park with Mrs. Mott, for the whole

afternoon, arrived home, jubilant with her good time, and rushed eagerly into the room, to tell her father all about it. She stopped bewildered, — for though it was only half-past five, the room was darkened and she could see nothing.

"Father!" she called, half-frightened. Then she heard a laugh, and the gas was suddenly turned on, nearly blinding her dazzled eyes.

Her father caught her in his arms.

"It's too large to hang on the door-knob, little daughter," he cried, gaily, "but we did the best we could."

Drawn across the corner of the rather bare room, was a magnificent grand piano. Its legs were tied up in voluminous petticoats of pink tissue-paper, while high frills of the same stood up jauntily behind the music-rack. A large card, tied on a great bunch of glorious sunset roses, announced —

"A May-basket for Little Winifred."

CHAPTER II.

THE beautiful piano had become an accepted fact in Winifred's life. For a little while she was simply dazed with bliss. The first night, long after midnight, her father was suddenly awakened by a soft footfall in the room, and then the light rustle of the tissue-paper.

"Anything wrong, Winifred?" he asked, hastily, sitting up in bed. Mr. Dent slept in the large room, on a couch, which did duty in the daytime as a divan, with an old Bagdad curtain over it for a cover, and chintz cushions. Winifred slept in the tiny room adjoining.

"No, father," came a soft little voice in answer to his question, "only I dreamed it was all a dream, and that I *didn't* have any *beautiful* piano, so I *had* to come out and see. Oh, you dear, dear thing! I wish I could take you to bed with me!" and Winifred laid her cheek lovingly against the cool, polished rosewood.

"It's surely here, my baby, but I am very certain it would prove a knobby bedfellow. You have the

piano, but the piano won't have you long if you trot around in your bare feet. Jump back into bed, sweet, and I'll tuck you up again. I'd play for you awhile, only I'm afraid of the big policeman over on Fourth Avenue; he would come and arrest me for disturbing the public peace."

Mrs. Adams was as good as her word, and began the very next day to give Winifred regular instruction. As she had said, teaching such a little enthusiast was a sheer delight. Winifred's slender fingers were made for the piano, and the music fairly seemed to make itself, Winifred declared sometimes, actually amazed at the harmony she evoked.

"Praying is the *oddest* thing," meditated Winifred aloud in one of the after-dinner confidences in the big chair. "I've thought about it a lot since I've had my *dear* piano. You know that last night we talked about it? Well, father, I had prayed and prayed before that. I had said everything I could think of to God about it. So that night I said to him, 'I *do* want a piano so, you can't think! and I don't see how I possibly can have one until I earn the money, and that will be a pretty long time; but perhaps *you* know some way. Please let me have it *somehow* if it's best, and oh, *please* let it be best.' And then I just told him I shouldn't say anything

more about it; for I didn't like to tease him. But somehow I felt that night just *sure* the piano would come. And you know, right after that it really came. I suppose he just made Mrs. Adams think about me when her friends offered her the piano, for she might have said, 'Oh, I have a new one! thank you very much;' but she didn't. She just thought of me."

Winifred had a way of rambling on, like this, to her father. Talking to him was only like talking to her own mind.

"Now, father," she went on, after a moment of further thought, "I want to ask you something else. Your book's most done, you said, and you know you're all tired out and want change of air," with her quaint, motherly little manner. "*Do* you think God would think I am a very teasy little girl, if I just ask him hard to manage some way to let us spend two or three days in the country? It would do you *so* much good, for you look *so* tired lately," and Winifred, with an anxious pucker, drew her velvet fingers across her father's broad, white forehead, and over the dark eyes, that had had a worn look underneath all their fun of late.

"I am afraid it will puzzle him to fix it," she added, softly, "but I do think you ought to go."

"Oh, my little Winifred!" cried her father, gather-

ing her close in his arms, "keep on praying for anything you want, and be sure your faith will be answered, since your works go hand in hand with it. It was good advice that Cromwell gave his soldiers: 'Trust in God, and keep your powder dry.'"

Winifred wrinkled her forhead over this for a moment, and then her father added, in a different tone:

"But we will try and get a long day in the country very soon, and that will be delightful. We will start by eight o'clock in the morning, and take a lunch with us, and stay all day, and not come back while there's a gleam of light left in the west. How would it be if we could do that several times this summer?"

"It would be *lovely*," cried Winifred. "And there is Central Park, too, to go to. When will your book be done, father?"

"Let me see. The villain dies to-day. Well, by Tuesday the others will all be married, and live happy ever after. It's in old-fashioned times, you know, and I must have it end in the old-fashioned way."

"It's a good way," said Winifred, nodding sagely, "I don't like die-y stories, or when people don't get what they want. It's so lovely to have a place where everybody gets the right thing. When people can

make things go *just* as they choose, as you can when you write books, I don't see *why* there's ever any sadness in books. *I* wouldn't put any in."

"Very well, little Madame de Staël. To return to our mutton. We will go on our expedition on Thursday, if it is pleasant, eh, sweetheart?"

Wednesday evening found Winifred and her father eagerly scanning the western heavens, where a brilliant sunset was regnant.

"*Sure* to be pleasant after that," said Mr. Dent, in a voice of conviction. "Come, sweet, let's see about lunch for to-morrow."

Winifred was in a state of rapture at the prospect of the country expedition. She whispered the news, that night, when her father had gone out for a few moments to supply some forgotten need, to her beloved piano, right into its glistening keys, that they were actually going away for a whole long day, away from the city heat and din and confusion, into the greenness and silence and cool delight.

They started so early the next morning that it was only nine o'clock when they arrived at the little country station of Chestnut Hill, and struck off across the fields. Mr. Dent carried a big box of luncheon, — a really tremendous box, indeed, — and Winifred's coat, as they would probably be late getting home.

Winifred, silent with happiness, walked along sedately, clasping her father's hand tightly. She loved the country, as she loved music and art, with a keenness that was akin to pain in her sensitive little soul.

"Why don't you run or skip?" inquired her father, looking down at her amusedly. "You can hold my hand any day."

"I'm really too happy to do anything but lie down and roll," laughed Winifred, with a loving glance at the soft, short, green meadow-grass over which they were walking.

"Here goes, then," and her father caught her up and laid her lightly, face down, on the sweet-smelling turf. Winifred nestled her face in it lovingly.

"This isn't very proper, but it's very nice," she remarked.

"Oh, proper!" laughed Mr. Dent. "Do anything you like out here, little grandmother. Do you think the robins and the snakes will be critical?"

"Snakes?" and Winifred was up on her tiptoes in an instant. "Oh, where?"

"Nowhere, goosie. I did not mean to frighten you. Shall we go on? See those fascinating-looking woods. Shall we explore them?"

Winifred skipped gaily along now. They crossed a brook on some very romantic stepping-stones, and

climbed a fence, — Mr. Dent said he was going to write a poem on the way Winifred climbed a fence, — and then found themselves in woods so cool and deep and solitary, that it was difficult to realise they were only twenty-five miles from New York.

"They look so — so abandoned," said Winifred. "You don't suppose there are any panthers and things that haven't died off yet, do you?"

Being fully reassured on this point, Winifred walked along now, merrily, but still holding close her father's hand. She never wanted to be very far away from him. They went deeper into the woods, and found some lovely wild-flowers. They ate fresh checkerberry leaves. They took up deep, soft pieces of moss for the little window-garden at home that Winifred petted and tended with wonderful results. And finally, though overcome all the time with a sense of impropriety, Winifred consented to her father's proposal that she should take off her shoes and stockings and paddle her feet in the clear-running little brook that danced and carolled blithely through the heart of the woods.

When Winifred's feet were dried and clothed again, they wandered on till they came to a fascinating spot in which to sit down and rest. They had come near the edge of the woods now, which

swept in a great curve around a stretch of green fields, all velvety with springing grain. The woods were very free of underbrush, and the moss under their feet was deep and soft. Mr. Dent threw himself on the ground all dry and leafy-smelling, at the foot of a huge old monarch among the trees, and Winifred curled herself close to him.

"Isn't this — angelic, father?" she sighed, happily. "Why does anybody live in the city, who can possibly live out in this big, beautiful, quiet place! Hark! you can hear the silence! Wouldn't you like to live in a tree all the time, father?"

"No, I thank you, my little dryad. I much prefer my own bed and board for a steady diet. You must have been a wood-nymph in some other stage of existence."

"I wouldn't like to think that people came back to this earth over and over," remarked Winifred. "It's a nice place, but it's nice to get through with it. Father, was it because the old Romans were so economical that they believed in using their old souls over and over again?"

"Good gracious, sweetheart! No, I don't fancy it was on the score of economy. Come, let's have luncheon, — I'm starving."

"What time is it? Only eleven? How joyful!

Think! we have almost all day before us yet, and it's *weeks* since we left home. I can hardly remember it; can you, father?"

"Just barely. It's early, but we had better take our luncheon now, pet. We'll leave some for supper, you know."

"Very well, father. Hark! did you hear anything? Listen! Isn't that some one calling?"

"It's a cry," exclaimed Mr. Dent, springing up. "I fancied I heard it once before. What direction is it? There it is again. Hark!"

A distant cry, faint yet distinct, came to their ears.

"Help!"

"It's over there," cried Winifred, running to the edge of the wood, and pointing across the field. "Let's run, father."

Lunch, flowers, and coat forgotten, over the grass flew Mr. Dent and Winifred, she panting a little, and falling to the rear.

"Help! help!" came the call, a little more plainly.

A rail fence, of the kind the farmers call a snake-fence, bounded the field on the farther side, and thorns and briers grew thickly in the angles. The cry plainly came from the other side of the fence.

Mr. Dent vaulted the rails into the briers on the other side. In the midst of them lay an old farmer,

his leg doubled under him, and blood streaming from a cut hand. A sharp scythe and the half-cut brambles told the story. Mr. Dent sprang to his side, while Winifred, horrified, peered over the fence.

"Caught my foot in a tangle," said the old man, faintly; "fell down and twisted my leg under me. Tried to get up, and cut my hand on my scythe. Put it down on it. Been screechin' here ever sence. Couldn't 'a' screeched much longer."

Mr. Dent bent over the old man, and lifted him so that the doubled-up leg could be straightened out. The sufferer gritted his teeth together, and grew whiter around the lips. Then Mr. Dent looked at the cut hand, which had a great gash in the fleshy part of it, and took out his handkerchief.

"Can you tell me where you live, or where I can go for help?" he asked, as he twisted his handkerchief around the big rough palm. "Give me your handkerchief, Winifred."

"I live over yonder," pointing vaguely eastward. "Go down along the fence till you come to a lane, and through it to the highroad, and my house is the only one in sight. There ain't no one to home, 'cept the old woman. Hired man's gone to the cirkis, — hired gal's gone, too. My wife, she's mindin' the baby, 'cause my darter she's gone too."

The old man said this with many pauses, sturdily suppressing a groan now and then.

"Where are your neighbours?"

"Every durned one of 'em is gone to the cirkis over to Wilton."

"Does your doctor live near?"

"Nigh on to a mile."

As he questioned, Mr. Dent had placed the old man more comfortably, and had bound up his hand.

"Run to the house, Winifred, and find his wife, and tell her what's happened. Don't frighten her. It's not serious, I think. See if she can send some one to help get him to the house, and also send for the doctor."

Winifred nodded, and sped away along the fence, into the lane, and down the highroad, where, a very short distance away, stood a wide, comfortable farmhouse under the trees. On a broad side porch sat a motherly-looking woman shelling peas. A tiny girl played on the steps with an alarming number of small dogs for playmates. They all rushed to the gate, barking vociferously at the little stranger, much to her alarm.

"They won't hurt you a mite," called the woman, smiling kindly. "Come right in," and Winifred, inwardly quaking, went up the path. She told her errand in her quiet, womanly fashion.

"Oh, dear suz!" cried the woman, gathering up her apron, that held the pea-pods, in one hand, and holding the pan of shelled peas in the other, as she ponderously rose. "You don't say so! Eph's hurt bad! Dear! dear! Whatever's to be done! Every livin' soul's gone to the cirkis over to Wilton, all the neighbourhood round, an' I ain't got a soul to send for the doctor, nor to bring Ephra'm in, nor nuthin', an' here's Emmer Louiser to look after. Dear suz!"

She was a strong, capable-looking woman, and though she hesitated, it was plainly not the hesitation of distraction. She was only considering the most direct way out of a difficult situation.

"I'll take care of the baby or go for the doctor, either," said Winifred, quickly. "Isn't there some one to send to help bring your husband home?"

"I don't believe there's a blessed soul left in the village, thet's got legs. The doctor lives purty near to a mile. You couldn't walk it," — with the usual country contempt for legs. "I could hitch up old Fan and go, ef you *could* stay with the baby. I'll just run and see Eph first, an' then I'll go for the doctor. Hark! there's wheels," and she hurried down to the gate.

"Hi, Mr. Wetzell! Mr. Wetzell!"

It was a big, lumbering wagon, of the kind the

country people call a democrat, and the driver was a kindly-faced, red-whiskered farmer. Bags of grain were in the back of the wagon. The man stopped good-naturedly at the call.

"Sho, now, Mis' Budd, thet's too bad," he kept saying, as she told him what had happened. Wal! wal! bad business! I better go an' help bring him in, an' you take my nag, an' go fur the doctor. Hed to take this critter 'cause the young folks hev everything else in the shape of horse-flesh, to the cirkis. Kinder slap the reins at her, an' she'll sorter jog along. Wish't I hed the young hoss here." The man had backed out and down from the high wagon as he talked.

"Mis'" Budd stood for a moment thoughtfully rubbing her chin.

"Yes, there ain't nothing better to be done. It seems sorter queer to go off and leave you to take care of Emmer Louiser in the house," to Winifred, "but I declare for't, I dunno what else to do. I'll jest step in an' git my sunbunnit, and lay out some rags an' things. Dear me suz! who'd hev thought it!"

She went to the house, and returned more quickly than one would have thought possible, to look at her bulk.

"I've opened the bed in my room, the one off the

setting-room, you know," she said to her neighbour, from the depths of a big brown sunbonnet, as she returned, "and I've put out a bundle of rags 'n' things, 'n' the kettle's a-bilin', 'n' if you want hot water, you kin lay him right in there," — with some natural confusion of ideas.

"It seems dretful queer, goin' off this way, an' I dunno who you be, nor nothin'," to Winifred again, "but you're a pretty good child, I know that, an' I know by the looks of you thet you'll take good care of Emmer Louiser. I won't be gone a mite longer'n I kin help," she added, as Mr. Wetzell helped her — shoved her, would be more appropriate — up on to the high, crooked step, and then over the side of the big wagon.

She gathered up the reins and slapped them over the horse's broad, white back.

"Git up, there — c'l'k! c'l'k!" and off she jogged behind the leisurely old mare, which her utmost exertions could scarcely get off a walk. Mr. Wetzell had instantly turned and had set off down the road and into the lane, at a heavy dog-trot.

It had really all passed very quickly. Winifred drew a long breath and looked around, feeling somewhat queer to find herself so suddenly in sole charge of the entire establishment, including a fat, staring,

two-year-old baby, and several frisky dogs, of whom she secretly felt in mortal terror. She didn't know exactly what to do. She turned and went slowly up to the broad piazza, and sat down in the big rocking-chair, which nearly swallowed her up. The big baby had sat solemnly on the grass during the whole scene, and made no sign of dissatisfaction at the change of guardians. Winifred knew enough of children to be sure that the let-alone policy is always a safe one.

She took up the dish of peas, and, drawing the basket nearer her, began to finish shelling them, — a very characteristic action.

Everything was as still as only the country on a hot summer day can be. All insect sounds, save a whirring locust, had ceased. The wide, empty back yards, the stretch of green grass, the tall trees, lay bathed alike in warm June light, under the blue sky. Winifred pinched herself to make sure she was not dreaming that she was sitting on the piazza, calmly shelling peas which belonged to somebody of whose very existence she had not been aware twenty minutes ago.

It seemed a very long time to her before she saw her father and Mr. Wetzell coming slowly up the road, carrying poor Mr. Budd on an old barn-door. They came very slowly, for their burden was heavy. The

old man moaned a little with pain now and then, and when the two men finally deposited him on the bed in the room off the sitting-room, he fainted away.

Most fortunately, just at that instant the doctor's buggy drew up before the door, with Mrs. Budd, urging on the old white nag, not far in the rear. She had, happily, met the doctor half-way. All four were needed in the sick-room for the next half-hour, while the clothing was being removed, the broken leg set, and the patient put properly to bed. Winifred patiently amused Emma Louisa, who stolidly accepted her attentions. She was all sympathy for the situation, and never gave a thought to the fact that her precious holiday was fast slipping away. It was past noon when Mr. Wetzell and Mr. Dent finally appeared. The former had to go about his own long delayed errands. Mr. Dent looked somewhat disturbed.

"The doctor is obliged to leave in a few minutes to go to a very sick patient, some miles away, to whom he was going when Mrs. Budd met him," he said, sitting down by Winifred. "There is absolutely no one around here to come in to help Mrs. Budd immediately, because everybody who can leave has gone to that famous circus. The family won't be home till five."

"Why then, *we'll* stay!" said Winifred, cheerfully.

"Emma Louisa is very good with me, and you can help poor Mr. Budd. Aren't you hungry, father? Couldn't we eat our luncheon here in the yard? I'll have to run over to the woods to get it. You know we left it there, and my coat too, when we heard the cry."

"But, sweetheart, you will lose all your holiday, and it had hardly begun. And you have enough of amusing children at home. You need a long, carefree day," her father said, drawing her to him, and turning up the fair, thin little face.

"We certainly must stay, father," said Winifred, decidedly. "I see in your eyes you think so too. We'll have quite a lot of time after five o'clock. It isn't dark till long after eight, — really dark, you know, — and you said we shouldn't go home while there's a ray of light left. Anyway, this is all outdoors," she went on, rather vaguely. "Isn't this a dear old home-like place? See the garden! and these are the cunningest dogs, and *just* as tame! I'm not a bit afraid of them now. And about lunch, father, aren't you hungry?"

"Oh, Mrs. Budd insists on getting dinner for us, if I can stay with her husband, though I told her we had a box of luncheon over in the woods, if the cows haven't eaten it up. She told me of a beautiful road

through the woods to a high hill, where there is a magnificent view, and, a little farther on, a romantic ravine and a fine waterfall. She thought we might like to go there after dinner," finished Mr. Dent, watching Winifred.

"How fine! father, don't you think we could possibly come out here another day and see it? I hope we can; anyway, we can't see it to-day. Is poor Mr. Budd *very* badly hurt, father?"

"He is in much pain just now, Winifred. I'm afraid it would have been pretty hard on the old man if we hadn't come along just then. His wife thought he had gone to another part of the farm, and it might have been hours before she would have found him there. Poor soul! she's so grateful to you, Winifred."

"To you, you mean, father. I'm only amusing Emma Louisa."

"And giving up your holiday without a thought," went through her father's mind; then he kissed her gently, and said:

"Very well, daughter. I'll go and stay with Mr. Budd."

Mrs. Budd came out as soon as he relieved her watch, for the old man was too feverish and suffering to be left alone for the present. She went up to Winifred and kissed her pale cheeks warmly.

"You're jest angels from heaven," she said, with tears in her eyes. "I dunno what my old man 'ud hev done, if you hedn't come along jest ez you did. There wuz a reg'lar Providence in it. I can't get you much of a dinner, 'cause we wuz calkelatin' to hev a pick-up one ourselves, being ez we wuz by ourselves. My! what a fancy that Duster's taken to you!" The Scotch terrier was nestling close to Winifred, sticking his cold little nose in her hand to attract her attention.

Mrs. Budd was moving leisurely about, talking all the time. She was one of those women who seem to be doing nothing in particular, until you suddenly see some definite result.

"My daughter, she's a master-hand fur dogs. She allers likes a hull mess of 'em underfoot," Mrs. Budd added.

"What are their names?" asked Winifred, actually venturing to stroke the silvery Skye.

"Thet one's called Smoke, on account of his colour. The fox-terrier, she's Gwendoline. My daughter, she found it in a book. An' thet's Duster. His tail looks jest like a feather duster, stickin' up so sassy. The black and tan, he's Tantrum. Kind of a joke, you see. She's learned 'em a lot of tricks. They can set up, an' play dead dogs, an' all sich."

Mrs. Budd had meantime whisked out a big ham, and some generous slices were sizzling over the coals. Potatoes were browning in a spider, eggs were frying, the peas, which Winifred had shelled, were bubbling gaily, while the coffee began to send out a delicious aroma.

Mrs. Budd had set the table between times, in an incidental sort of way, and now she brought out, at intervals, from the depths of the big, hospitable "but'try," a glass pitcher of cream, thicker and yellower than Winifred had ever imagined was a possibility of cream, a big pitcher of rich milk, a quaint old silver basket of cake, two kinds of pickles, strawberry jam, and a great thick custard pie with fascinating little brown blisters all over it.

"Poor Eph!" said Mrs. Budd, dexterously turning the broiling ham. "Like enough he'd er bled to death, if you hedn't happened along jest ez you did. Your pa sez you wuz both out fur a holiday. This ain't much like one, I'm bound to confess. I hate to hev you lose it this way."

"Oh, but we're not losing it!" said Winifred, opening her great eyes wide.

"It's lovely here in this big garden," she added, cheerily. "You have such beautiful flowers, and I love them so. And see how green the grass is, and

the sky is so blue, and *aren't* the shadows lovely! Don't you *love* shadows?"

Mrs. Budd looked curiously at the earnest little face; then she glanced from the open kitchen-door across the stretch of green, sun-flecked grass.

"Shadows *are* purty, — and you're a nice child," she added, irrelevantly. "There! things is ready. I'll call your pa, an' ef Eph ain't asleep I'll stay with him while you eat your dinner."

But Mr. Budd, worn out with pain, had just fallen asleep, so Mrs. Budd could join them at their meal. A merry time they had of it, all three, in spite of Mrs. Budd's anxiety about her husband, and Winifred grew quite confidential, and chatted gaily away, very unlike her usual manner with strangers. Perhaps the homeliness of the whole scene made the difference. Mrs. Budd soon knew how Winifred and her father kept house all by themselves in a flat, and about her May-basket piano, and how they went every night to a restaurant for their dinner. The auditor listened and laughed, and said, "Dear me suz!" at appropriate intervals.

After dinner Emma Louisa was put to bed for a nap, and Winifred insisted on helping Mrs. Budd "clear up." Before they had finished, the doctor returned, and then both Mrs. Budd's help and Mr.

Dent's was needed for a time, for the old man awoke more feverish and in much pain, and the doctor began to fear other injuries. He would not let his wife out of his sight, so Winifred, deft with home experience, finished putting the shining kitchen in order. When that was done, she sat down on the piazza-steps to rest, for she began to realise that she was decidedly tired with the experiences of this novel day. But just at that moment, Emma Louisa announced by a whimper that she was ready to be taken up and amused.

Winifred bathed the baby's hot little face and hands, straightened her tumbled clothes, brushed out her tangle of yellow floss, and took her out on the shaded grass with a picture-book.

An hour slipped by. The lengthening shadows showed the day was passing. Then Mr. Dent came out. The doctor had gone some time before.

"Mr. Budd is sleeping again. I told Mrs. Budd we'd go over to the woods and get our traps. The family will be home before long. She wants us to come back for supper. Would you like to?"

"Yes — only — we hadn't better, had we, father? We'd only be in the way. Can we take Emma Louisa with us over to the woods? I can't leave her."

"Yes. Her grandmother said there was a little

cart here that they drag her round in. Here it is. In you go, your Majesty. We'll take it down the lane, and then you can stay with her while I go across the field to the woods for the things. We'll try to get off again next month, sweetheart, to make up for this lost day."

"But, *father* dear!" persisted Winifred, as the procession, escorted by all the dogs, went down the road, "we've had a fine time. Wasn't that dinner good? It was so dear and funny, with everything all together on the table that way. Only I keep being so sorry for poor Mr. Budd. And it isn't as if Emma Louisa was a bad child," unconsciously falling into her matronly tone, "like little Madeleine Harris. She's *so* difficult, you can't think! But Emma Louisa's as good as gold. Isn't it funny to have two names like that?"

"Very funny. They do that in the South a good deal, also. I used to know a fellow who was always called Jim Eddie, and I knew a girl once who was named Isabella Mamie."

Winifred's laugh rang out, and her father set himself to amuse her further, never a very difficult task.

As they came slowly back up the road, having collected their baggage, they saw a big wagon draw up before the gate. It contained the family, consisting of the married daughter and her husband, the

"hired man," and the "hired girl." Mrs. Budd met them at the door, and explanations followed. Then all scattered to different pressing duties, and so it happened that when Winifred and her father went slowly into the yard, no one was about, and they still remained in charge of the baby.

Presently Mrs. Budd came out to them, as they sat on the grass under the big trees.

"You poor little dear! Are you still taking care of baby? I thought Mary Lib had her. I think Mr. Budd's all right now, for he's more comf'table, an' he's jest dropped off. Now you shall stay for supper, and after that Dan'l shall drive you over to Chestnut Hill in time for the 7.33 train. He hes to go there, anyway. Now go out into the garden, and pick a great, big bunch of posies to take home with you. Get a lot, — all you kin carry. An' I've put up a chocolate layer cake for you to take home. An' I've been thinkin' this afternoon — are you a jedge of bees, Mr. Dent? S'posen you come and see mine," and, with this abrupt change of subject, she suddenly marshalled Mr. Dent around the corner of the house.

When they returned, some fifteen minutes later, the kind old lady caught up Winifred in her arms and kissed her warmly.

"Now, I *am* proud and pleased," she said, heartily. "Do you know what your pa's been and done? He's promised, true-blue, to let you come out here and stay for a spell. He says somethin' about a week, but we'll see about that. Seems as if I couldn't thank you enough for being so kind o' neighbourly to-day; takin' your holiday, too!"

Winifred looked breathlessly at her father. Whole days together of this beautiful country life? Was Paradise opening?

"I've said yes, darling, if you wish it," her father answered, smiling at her.

"You too, father?" Winifred hung on his answer, for even the bliss of Paradise would be put aside if it did not include her father.

"Of *course*, your pa is comin' too," put in Mrs. Budd, quickly. "I know it's a great favour I'm askin', that you should come and stay with us plain folks a spell, but if you can put up with us, it will give us a sight o' pleasure." She put the matter thus, like the true lady she was.

"So it's for you to settle, sweet," said her father, touching her soft cheek.

"Oh, *father!*" cried Winifred. And so the matter was considered settled.

CHAPTER III.

"SUCH a beautiful ending to our day!" sighed Winifred, in rapturous delight, as she nestled closer to her father in the cars on the homeward way. A tremendous bunch of flowers reposed in the hat-rack over their heads, side by side with a big tin box, which contained the chocolate cake.

"What wonderful things happen to me!" she went on. "It's just like good fairies! First there was my *dear* piano, which I wanted *so*, and now here's this lovely visit to the country, which I never thought I could *possibly* have. And I don't have to do a thing but sit still and take things as they come!"

Her father smiled rather peculiarly as he drew her closer to him.

"Do you know, I rather think your good fairy was yourself, to-day, sweetheart, considering that you won Mrs. Budd's heart by taking care of little Emma Louisa nearly all day, when you were supposed to take a holiday from that very thing."

"Oh, it was just nothing at all to take care of that

good little thing!" said Winifred, from the depths of her experience. "Only I *did* hate to have you so much of this lovely day in that tiny little sick-room. You see, I was out under those lovely trees. Oh, think of having those trees for two weeks!"

You may imagine what a fervour of excitement Winifred was under till the eighteenth of June, which was the date set for the exodus. All the small possessions were packed and repacked a dozen times, together with her father's, in the small steamer trunk that afforded ample room for all their united necessities; for Winifred's was a very limited wardrobe, — literally "one dress on, one dress off, and one to spare."

The night of the last day, Winifred sat talking to her beloved piano, as she called her simple improvising.

"Will you be *very* lonely, you dear thing?" she asked, at last, with sudden compunction, sweeping her finger along the notes, caressingly. "I'd *love* to take you with us, but you see, you're so big — you can't go into the luncheon-box, and I can't squeeze you into my pocket. See, I'll leave my handkerchief on the keys, so you won't be very lonely, and I'll put some music on the rack, and you can play all by yourself, if you want to. Wouldn't it be funny, if I should come in some day and see your keys all going up and

down by themselves! I wonder they don't, sometimes. What lovely things you'd play if you could only remember all the beautiful things people have played on you, — people who know how, I mean. And oh!" laying her cheek against the shining case, and rambling on aloud, as children who are much alone have a way of doing, "if you could only remember the time when you were growing in the woods, the beautiful woods far away south, in the lovely warm countries where father says you grew, and if you could remember what the birds sang in your branches, when you were part of a tree, and how the warm, warm sun shone down upon you, and how the blue sky smiled on you, and how the little white clouds ran about in the sky, and how the gay flowers looked up at you and waved their heads, and everything was green and still around — Oh! I wish I could *play* it!"

Winifred clasped her hands, and her large eyes deepened and softened and took on a far-away, listening look.

The second arrival of the Dents at Chestnut Hill was about five in the afternoon. Dan'l was there with the big wagon, and the two horses, and Mrs. Budd and Emma Louisa, all awaiting the train with equal eagerness. At least, the big wagon and Emma Louisa looked about equally excited.

Winifred scarcely knew Mrs. Budd, who was all arrayed in her Sunday best, in honour of the occasion. She was a large, fine-looking woman, with iron-gray hair, that came down to the tops of her ears in soft, natural waves, on each side of her plump, kindly face. She welcomed her guests so cordially that they felt as if they were coming home, instead of going among perfect strangers.

It was only a day or two before Winifred really felt perfectly at home. No one tried to entertain her especially, and as everything went on in ordinary routine, she could not feel she was in any one's way. She was only assured that she was welcome to everything, and to go anywhere and do anything, absolutely without limit. To be sure, Mrs. Budd pursued her with big tumblers of yellow milk and sugar cookies at all hours of the day, but Winifred found that an agreeable variety of experience.

She and her father wandered all over the great farm, like two children, Mr. Dent often throwing off his coat and lending a hand here and there. The first grass-cutting was going on, and soon came the unique experience of riding on great loads of sweet-smelling hay. Winifred developed such amazing tomboy proclivities that her father declared he would expect to see her walking up telegraph-poles

when they returned to New York, or scaling the sides of the houses. Cherries were ripe, and Winifred learned to climb trees. Strawberries were red in the fields, and Winifred would search unweariedly by the hour, for the tiny, red, honey-drops. There was a delight in finding them in the full clusters, cuddling in the grass, which was lacking in picking the big, stately berries in the garden.

Then there were many cows, and much milk and butter to be attended to. Winifred looked with breathless astonishment at the amount of work that Mrs. Budd and her married daughter, a bright, bouncing young woman of twenty-two, and the "hired girl," who rejoiced in the name of Myrtle Odell, managed to accomplish between them. To be sure, they were up at unearthly hours in the morning, ages before Winifred stirred in her little white bed.

"You take your ease in bed," Mrs. Budd had said that very first night, when Winifred stood, with a candle — actually a candle, just like a fairy story — in her hand, saying good night. "Don't get up till half-past six or seven, and we'll have breakfast ready for you when you come down."

Winifred, greatly amazed and amused that any one could consider not getting up till half-past six or seven as lying in bed late, glanced at her father.

"Can *any*body think half-past six is late?" she said to him, laughing, when he came into her room to kiss her good night. "Isn't it too funny? I scarcely ever heard of any one's getting up so early."

But after a few mornings Winifred decided it was perfectly fascinating to get up early, when everything was deliciously fresh, and the birds were still twittering and chirping and giving the bird children their breakfast. The strawberries never tasted the same, later, as they did with the morning dew fresh on them.

Winifred's pale cheeks soon rounded, and took on a wild rose tint. Her light step grew more elastic, and her brown eyes were as brilliant as stars. She sung about the house and fields all day long, till her father actually wondered if this buoyant little maid could be his demure little daughter. Happy she always was, but not often gay.

Mr. Budd was improving rapidly. His broken leg was doing well, and his cut hand was nearly healed. His visitors were an unmitigated boon to him. He taught Winifred to play dominoes and checkers and backgammon, and talked politics and religion with her father. Mr. Dent had suggested, a day or two after he came, that Mr. Budd should be lifted on to a cot-bed, which could easily be rolled through the wide

doors out on the piazza, where he could have the air all day. This agreed with him capitally, so between sunshine, fresh air, and good company, he mended rapidly.

Winifred liked "Mary Lib," the married daughter, very much. Her husband had taken charge of the home farm this year, to relieve Mr. Budd of so much care. "Mary Lib" had been married at seventeen, and in many ways she was as much a child at heart as Winifred herself. She thought her little visitor was too "sweet pretty" for words, and very soon begged her to call her "Mary Lib, as the others did."

The fact that Mr. Dent actually wrote books for a living, filled them all with amazement and awe. They were never tired hearing stories of Winifred's simple life, that to them seemed most exciting — especially having dinner at a restaurant every night. To each of the auditors, that is, of the womankind, a day in town for shopping was an event, and the luncheon at a restaurant was referred to for weeks.

Emma Louisa was also soon Winifred's devoted shadow, though Grandma Budd, as she insisted on Winifred's calling her, was always on the watch to see that her little visitor was not burdened by her. Emma Louisa was a funny little silent thing, who would not use her tongue if she could possibly help

it, but preferred to make signs for everything. Winifred was soon fond of her, for she was really no trouble at all, being perfectly used to making her own amusement, as most country-bred children are.

"Let's go for a long walk this afternoon, after the dishes are done up," suggested Mrs. Larkin to Winifred, at dinner, one day.

"Oh, let's!" agreed Winifred, always ready for anything. "You too, father?"

"Not to-day, you frivolous young woman. I've been having a round of giddy idleness all the week, and I must finish some work this afternoon. Did you get me my stamps at the village yesterday, daughter?"

"Yes, father, and they're in the pocket of my other dress. I'll give them to you when I put it on, after dinner."

Winifred was now getting well used to the country roads, although the unevenness of them at first hurt her feet badly. She was, of course, a capital walker, owing to long strolls with her father all over New York. She could tire "Mary Lib" out completely, for country people ordinarily walk very little. It amazed Winifred to see how the horse was "hitched up," in country vernacular, for every little errand to the village, only a little over a mile away, when she thought nothing of skipping down there twice a day. But Mary Lib

had really learned to enjoy walking with Winifred as a companion.

They started after dinner and dishes were out of the way. Mrs. Larkin carried a little basket with a goodly supply of sugar cookies, for which Winifred had developed the most amazing capacity.

They went westward over the hills. Although it was now early in July, it was not very hot, and a delicious air was stirring. They had walked for an hour or more along shady roads, and sunny stretches, when Winifred suddenly spied something ahead of them on the level road.

"They are people with bicycles, — two of them," she said. "They're ladies. I wonder if anything's happened."

"We'll ask them when we get there," said Mary Lib, panting. "You tell 'em I'm a-comin'."

Winifred laughed and slackened her pace. In a few minutes they had reached the bicyclists, who were bending over one wheel, while the other stood against the fence.

"It's of no use, Rosalind," Winifred heard one of the riders say, as she approached. "I'll have to walk. I wonder if it's farther, to go on to the next village, or back to the last one."

"That is four miles," looking at her cyclometer.

"I beg your pardon," said Winifred's shy, sweet voice behind them. "Could we help you any?"

Both ladies turned at the voice.

"I'm afraid not, thank you, my little maid," one of them answered. "I have a puncture, and neither of us have anything to mend it with, with us. I don't know that I could manage, if I had."

The speaker had such a lovely face and charming manner, that Winifred's artistic little soul was lost in admiration. She almost forgot to answer, so fascinated was she.

"I am *so* sorry," she said, after a moment. "I hoped it was something we could help you in."

"Is it far to the next village?" inquired the lady called Rosalind.

"It's a good piece," said Mrs. Larkin, to whom Winifred appealed. "It's pretty near on to five miles. Unless you go back to Jones's Corners, where you must have come through; that ain't more than four miles, I guess, or, mebbe, three."

"That's the best thing to do, then," sighed the owner of the puncture. "If only I had something to paste on it!"

"I've heard of people's using chewing-gum," Mary Lib suggested, practically.

Both ladies laughed.

"Unfortunately we are not supplied," said she of the musical voice, that made one think of birds and flowers and lovely things.

"Oh, oh!" cried Winifred, hastily, diving down into her pocket. "Wouldn't postage stamps do? Could you paste these on? I forgot to give them to father." She produced an envelope, and held it out shyly.

"You dear child!" cried the lady, "I do believe I can! Don't you think so, Rosalind? Is it too large a puncture? It's pretty big."

It certainly was, for it could be seen quite plainly.

"It's worth trying," said Rosalind, kneeling down on the grass again. "Paste two or three on, and then we'll begin to pump up."

It was slow work pumping up with the tiny hand-pump. They each took "stent" at it, as Mary Lib said, and at last the flattened rubber began to rise slowly. The stamps were doing their duty. When the tire was nearly full, they carefully pasted on the other stamps, adjusting them so that they would strengthen each other, yet not be in a thick bunch, and then finished pumping. Then both ladies tore their handkerchiefs into strips, and bound them smoothly around the place.

"That's an invention!" exclaimed the owner of the wheel, proudly, as she surveyed their united

handiwork. "That will certainly hold till I get to Jones's Corners, and I think I saw a little bicycle place there. Now, my good fairy, about your stamps. We are staying at the Kalaba House at North Eden, about ten miles from here. May I ride over and bring you some more stamps some day? Where do you live?"

"Oh, I'd love to have you come!" cried Winifred, eagerly. "Ask for Budd's Farm. It's only about three miles away. I'd like father to see you. *Wasn't* it fortunate I forgot to give the stamps to him?"

"Poor father!" laughed Rosalind. "This is rather a Mark Twain moral, isn't it? What did you say your name is?"

"Larkin," said Mary Lib, as the little maid answered, "Winifred."

The other lady hesitated an instant, then drew off a tiny, twisted hoop of gold which she wore above a plain gold ring on her third finger. She took Winifred's right hand, and slipped it on her finger.

"It's only a little guard that I wear above my wedding-ring when I'm riding, but I don't really need it. Wear it, dear, and remember me. I wish I had something else for you. But I'll come and see you surely." She cut short Winifred's exclamations with a kiss, shook hands with a cordial word of

thanks to Mary Lib, sprang on her wheel, and was off.

"It goes finely," she called back, over her shoulder, and then they were out of sight around a curve in the road.

"What a darling child!" said the lady to Rosalind. "A little city cousin, I fancy. She was not country bred, although her dress was almost shabby. Did you ever see anything lovelier than that reddish-gold hair and those brown eyes? We'll certainly ride over there soon and take some stamps, for I'd like to see her again."

"We've had an adventure, father!" cried Winifred, excitedly, jumping at her father's knee, as he sat on the piazza by Mr. Budd, who was now sitting up with his leg across two chairs. "She was the loveliest lady! She's coming to see me some day. And she gave me this little ring. It's a guard to her wedding-ring, so she didn't really need it, and I'm *so* glad I forgot about your stamps, father! Unless — did you need them?"

Mr. Dent laughed heartily over the story.

"That's a novel use for stamps! When I get you your bicycle, Winifred, always carry a supply."

"Oh, I don't mean to have a bicycle, father!" answered Winifred, seriously; "you know we're

going to have a pony and cart, when we buy our house in the country, and I can't use stamps on the pony. He'd look like a circus horse."

Winifred thought of her "lovely lady," as she began to call her, by day, and dreamed of her by night, and kept a private lookout toward the west for days. They could hardly drag her out of sight of the house, and then she went under protest. But gradually, as time passed by, and the lady did not come, she slipped down into a little private corner of Winifred's heart, and though other interests occupied her mind, she never forgot her "lovely lady."

Winifred had now been a whole month at the farm. Several times Mr. Dent had made decided moves toward going home, but his hosts would not hear of it. He saw perfectly well that they were in earnest when they urged that it was the greatest pleasure to have them there, for it brought much brightness and a new element into the busy routine of their lives. Finally, Mrs. Budd flatly refused to hear of Winifred's leaving them a moment before the first of September, "ef they hed to tie her, an' dear knew, she'd die of homesickness if he didn't stay too."

Mr. Dent laughed, but remained firm. At last they compromised on the question of board. Winifred was to stay on as before, and Mr. Dent would board with

them, board being put at a figure so low that it was quite within Mr. Dent's means, but which Mrs. Budd averred that she was 'most ashamed to ask, 'cause she'd make money on it.

But so it was settled, and so Winifred had her happy summer.

CHAPTER IV.

WINIFRED felt as if an event of national importance was happening, that morning on which she first entered on her school career. She greatly dreaded beginning. She had known so few little girls, and those only incidentally, that she was shy with them. She could talk fearlessly with grown people, but girls, like herself, simply puzzled her.

Still, her father thought she was far too much alone, and he knew she needed the companionship of other children, and all her insisting that she needed no other playfellow than himself, was useless.

Mr. Dent's book — not the very last one, of course, for that was not yet published, but the one that came out in the winter — was proving really a success, and close economy was not so necessary, or rather, there was a little more money for the necessities, like Winifred's education.

"I always knew that book would sell like wildfire," remarked Winifred, triumphantly.

"Pray, miss, who ever heard of anybody, in his

sober senses, buying wild-fire?" inquired her father teasingly. "That was just the trouble with my other books: they sold exactly *like* wild-fire."

It was rather a forlorn little maid whom her father escorted to school that first morning. She had never even been inside a schoolroom, having always been taught at home. It was a private school, kept in a large private house. Her mind was greatly relieved when the principal came into the reception-room, into which they had been shown. She was a tall, gracious, handsome woman, beautifully dressed, with a winning manner and a kindly welcome to the shrinking little maid, that warmed Winifred's heart to her at once.

She smiled at the varied nature of Winifred's attainments. The child knew a fair amount of Latin, read and spoke French very well, loved English history, had absorbed much of Shakespeare, Goldsmith, and the English classics generally, and knew almost nothing of arithmetic beyond the multiplication table, and an extremely limited acquaintance with fractions.

But Miss Hamilton seemed to think that was nothing serious, and suggested taking Winifred up-stairs at once. So the little girl kissed her father good-bye, and, with a queer choking feeling in her heart, followed Miss Hamilton to the sunny schoolroom above.

And so her school-life began.

A very happy life Winifred soon found it. There were about twenty other little girls of her own age in the room where she was put, all in charge of a pretty, bright, young lady, of whom Winifred soon became very fond.

Her seat-mate was a curly-headed little girl, named Eleanor Howe, and the two children soon became close friends. Winifred looked with awe, however, on her little companion, for whom the nine table had no terrors, who multiplied and divided with marvellous rapidity, who was quite at home in the bewildering mysteries of decimals, and who talked glibly of pounds, avoirdupois weights, and townships, as if they were intimate friends.

To Eleanor, on the other hand, Winifred seemed a marvel of learning. The Latin declensions and conjugations rolled smoothly off her tongue, she understood all Mademoiselle said in French, no matter how fast she talked, and seemed to feel well acquainted, not only with different Greek and Roman gentlemen of note, and gods and goddesses, but also with early Britons, Revolutionary heroes, and Napoleon. This Mutual Admiration Society was really a great benefit to each little girl, spurring each one on to improve neglected branches.

All sorts of confidences were soon exchanged. Winifred soon knew that Eleanor's father and mother had gone to Bermuda for the winter, for her father had been very ill. Eleanor was left at home in charge of an elderly auntie, who lived with them. The family had only lately come to New York from Boston, so Eleanor had few friends, and was very lonely at home.

You may be sure that Winifred passed on all this information to her father.

"And *think!*" she would finish, cuddling closer, "she is all alone without her *father*." This summed up human misery to her.

"Couldn't we do something for her?" asked Winifred one day, late in the fall. "She's lonely, father, and doesn't know many little girls. Couldn't I ask her to go on some of our Saturday afternoon expeditions?"

"I think we could, pet. But I know somebody else who 'doesn't know many little girls.' Isn't she lonely, sometimes?"

"Who, I? Why, father, I have *you*," cried Winifred, in wide-eyed surprise. "But I'm so glad I've found out how nice little girls are," she added, thoughtfully. "I used to be afraid of them."

"*I* knew how nice they were, long ago," said her father, laughing. "It's my superior intelligence."

"Stop teasing, father. Can we ask her for Saturday? I know you'll like her. We were going to the Metropolitan, you know."

Little Eleanor was only too glad to join them, for her auntie was getting old and seldom took the pains to plan any amusement for her. She simply let her do precisely as she pleased, and even this grows tiresome.

Mr. Dent liked his daughter's little friend, who was ladylike and well-bred, with pretty, refined manners. It soon fell into a custom for Eleanor to share regularly their Saturday afternoon excursions. Gay times these simple expeditions were. It was a pretty sight to see the sunny-faced, bright-haired children with Mr. Dent, all three laughing and talking gaily about all sorts of things, while Mr. Dent joked and teased them, and told stories about the many places they went to, and explained everything so delightfully. As some of his recent work had needed much study in early New York history and localities, he had all sorts of fascinating stories at his tongue's end. Eleanor began to think that New York was an enchanted land of delights.

Strange to say, it was long after Christmas before Winifred visited Eleanor. She had begged Winifred to come, over and over, but when school was out at

two, the latter wanted to hurry home so she could get her lessons for the next day, and have her walk later with her father, which nothing would have induced her to miss. During the Christmas holidays Eleanor's auntie took her to Boston for a two weeks' visit, so there was no chance then.

At last there came a day when Mr. Dent had an invitation to an authors' dinner, an affair which he could not well miss, and also an important business engagement the same afternoon. Therefore Eleanor pounced upon this opportunity to carry her little friend home to luncheon with her.

Winifred had never thought about what sort of a place Eleanor's home might be, but from anything the latter had ever said, it might have been as simple as her own. Consequently, Winifred could hardly believe her eyes when they went up the steps of a beautiful house near the park. She drew a long breath of amazement as a butler opened the door, and the children entered. Her feet sank in a velvet carpet. Rich draperies were everywhere. Beautiful pictures lined the walls. The gleam of statuary, the flash of mirrors, the perfume of a wealth of flowers, dazzled her senses.

"*Oh!*" she cried, stopping short, her soul satisfied to its depths by the warmth, the luxury, the elegance.

"What's the matter?" asked Eleanor, wondering. Everything about her had been part of her daily life since babyhood. She had no idea what a fairy-land it all looked to Winifred.

"Come up to my room. Mamma sent me a box of Bermuda fruits. Some of them are so queer." She drew Winifred up-stairs.

More wonders! Could it be possible that any child, actually her own friend, slept and dressed and lived in that wonderful room? It was all in white and gold and blue. White enamelled furniture with brass fittings; white Swiss curtains with pale blue silk draperies over them. A marvellous little dressing-table, loaded with things in ivory and blue and gold enamel. The daintiest pictures on the wall in white, and gold, or blue frames. Oh, everything!

Winifred stood with clasped hands, drinking it all in with eager delight. She hardly heard Eleanor's chatter, as her little hostess tried to take off Winifred's outdoor things.

"*Winifred!* wake up! I do believe you're asleep," she said, at last, laughing.

"Take off your things, and come and see auntie first, then we'll have lunch. See! here are the Bermuda fruits. Taste this funny thing!"

Winifred drew a long breath and came into the world again. She took off her things, tasted the queer fruit, and went then to Miss Harrison's room with Eleanor. The old lady, who was Eleanor's great-aunt, welcomed her little guest cordially, and warmly thanked her for doing so much to make her little niece happy. She had been terribly lonesome, she said, after her father and mother had gone away, before she knew Winifred.

"Lonely!" thought Winifred; "how could any one be lonely in this beautiful place?" Then she remembered.

"Her father is away," and she knew she wouldn't be happy in Paradise itself if she were separated from *her* father.

The little girls had a glorious afternoon. Seeing Winifred's delight over everything, Eleanor went through the beautiful rooms, showing her pictures, books, statuary, and photographs from abroad. Many of the places Eleanor had seen herself and could describe. Then her auntie asked them if they would not like to drive with her through the park and up Riverside Drive.

"Oh, that's so stupid, auntie!" began Eleanor, when, catching sight of Winifred's face, she instantly added:

"All right! We'll go. You'll like to, won't you, Winifred?"

Eleanor could hardly understand Winifred's enthusiasm as they went up Riverside Drive.

"I'm *so* sorry I didn't know you liked driving so much, Winifred, dear," she said, almost apologetically. "We might have gone out lots of times. I always thought it was *so* much fun to go with you in horse-cars and on the elevated. There's nobody but auntie to use the carriage, and she often goes out just to have the horses exercised, don't you, auntie? We'll get your father to drive with us up here next Saturday, if he will."

When they came back, Eleanor told the coachman to drive to Huyler's, where she ordered a big box of candy. Then they drove home, and had a lovely hour before dinner, in the drawing-room, where Winifred played on the fine concert grand, snatches of this or that, as she could remember, stopping now and then to twirl around and talk to old Miss Harrison and Eleanor. Miss Harrison had been a fine musician in her day, and she nodded her white puffed head approvingly, as Winifred played.

"She has the touch," she said to herself. "I wonder who the child is? I must find out more about her. What an amount of music she gets out of those

simple little things. Why, the child is actually improvising, now!"

"Isn't it *wonderful* how Winifred plays?" Eleanor was asking. "Think how I've taken lessons ever since I could crawl, and I can't even play 'Rig-a-jig-jig' decently!"

Then dinner was announced. The dinner was as much a revelation to Winifred as all the rest, with its beautiful damask and glass and china and roses, and grave butler. She was too true a lady to seem awkward, and indeed, so far from that, that it seemed, strangely enough, that *this* was the sort of place that she really belonged in. Everything began to have a dim familiarity. She only longed for her father to enjoy it also.

Eleanor had ordered the carriage for nine o'clock to take her home, and she herself, and a maid, drove with Winifred through the familiar lighted streets to the little girl's home. Winifred bade a loving "Good-bye till to-morrow," and flew up-stairs, feeling as if she were Cinderella after the ball. She opened the door of their room, and found that her father had left the gas lighted. After all, how dear the familiar, homely things looked! Winifred dropped on her knees in front of her father's chair, by his desk, and laid her head on the cushion.

"It's home where father is!" she said.

The next morning her tongue could hardly go fast enough to tell Mr. Dent of all the wonderful things that enchanted house contained.

"Isn't it funny that Eleanor never said one word, even, about living in such a *beau*tiful place?" she said, meditating. "And she always says we have such good times together, and she loves to ride on street-cars, and yet she could go out *any* time behind those splendid horses! Things are very queer."

"Things are, my daughter," answered her father, laughing. "That's a fact it's well to digest and accept early in life. Things are queer, and we can't always alter their queerness."

It was only a week after that, that Eleanor was absent from school one day, for the first time. Winifred missed her sadly and wondered if she were sick. But that very afternoon, about three o'clock, a carriage drew up before the apartment house, and Eleanor flew out and up-stairs to Winifred's rooms.

"Mamma's come home! Mamma's come home!" she shouted, catching Winifred in her arms and dancing wildly about the room. "They came early this morning. You see, papa got better very fast down there, and he got a cable about some important business, and the doctor said he was well enough to

come, so they just took the steamer that was leaving that very day, and they got in New York at seven this morning and surprised us all. I've been having *such* a good time this morning. And I want mamma to see you awfully, so she said I could come down and get you for a little while. *Please* come, straight off. Please, *please*."

Eleanor's impetuosity always carried Winifred off her feet, for a moment, so now she found herself in the carriage almost before she realised it.

Eleanor fairly jabbered all the way home — talking doesn't begin to express it — in her excitement at having her parents back, and the pleasure of showing "her treasure," as she called Winifred, to her mother.

"I told mamma that I had the dearest, sweetest, loveliest thing that ever was born, for a friend of my very own," she said. "You know we're going to be friends always, Winifred, like mamma and aunt — oh, see that horse, he's running away! No, he isn't either. Mamma always said I must choose my friends very carefully, 'cause a friend lasted so long. I told her I did choose you carefully, for I loved you the first minute I saw you, and I couldn't help it, and I love you a million times better now," and Eleanor emphasised her remarks by a hug and kiss then and there.

"Oh, I've written her just stacks about you. She said in her last letter that she guessed if I were asked to spell New York, I'd spell it W-i-n-i-f-r-e-d."

"Come in this way, little girls," called a gay voice, as the two ran up the stairs. "I'm in my dressing-room."

Winifred started at the voice, and sprang forward. A tall lady, in a blue silk dressing-gown, came toward the door, as they entered.

"So this is Eleanor's little friend," she said, with both hands out. "I'm so — why, it's my little fairy of the postage stamps!"

"It's my bicycle lady!" and somehow or other, Winifred never knew how, she found herself in the lady's arms with both her own arms about the other's neck, while Eleanor, half frantic with curiosity and surprise, clamoured to know all about it.

At last Mrs. Howe sat down on a divan, with a little girl closely hugged up to her on either side, and proceeded to relate the incident of their first acquaintance to Eleanor. She also explained to Winifred, how, when she reached home that very afternoon of the mishap, she found that her husband had met with a serious accident while gunning. Physicians from New York were at once summoned, but he was ill for weeks, and then, in the fall, when he did not

gain strength as he should, he was ordered to Bermuda.

Eleanor was visiting some relatives at the time of the accident, and had scarcely been with her mother at all, during her father's illness, so the postage stamp episode had never been mentioned to her.

"But I thought of my little brown-eyed fairy very often, I assure you," said Mrs. Howe, in her winning way. "I never thought to find her my Eleanor's friend. My dear, I thought you said your name was Larkin."

"Oh, *no*," laughed Winifred. "That's Mary Lib's name."

"But — how is it? Are they relatives?"

Winifred laughed again.

"How funny that seems!" she said. "No, they're not relatives, but they're such dear people. Father and I went out in the country to spend the day, and we found poor Mr. Budd in the field with his leg broken. Father helped him home, and helped Mrs. Budd till the doctor came, 'cause she was all alone, and — why, then she invited us to come and see her, and we went to stay a week, and then — oh, she was *so* kind! She insisted and *insisted* on my staying longer. So we did. I had the nicest time you can

think of. The country is *so* lovely. We stayed all summer."

Mrs. Howe smiled, and thought that she did not wonder at Mrs. Budd's "insisting and insisting" at Winifred's staying. She felt inclined there and then to do the same thing.

"I've told mamma all the angelic things we've done together, Winifred," broke in Eleanor, "and she says we can take her to some of them that she's never been to."

"Your father was exceedingly kind to give another little girl the advantage of your Saturday excursions, dear," said Eleanor's mother. "My little girl would have had a lonely time but for you. It troubled me a good deal to leave her so alone, but it seemed best not to take her, and I was very much relieved to find she had found a friend at school." She did not add that any one at Miss Hamilton's school was sure to be a safe friend, socially, for Eleanor, and she had easily judged from Eleanor's earliest raptures about her new "chum," as she called her, that Winifred had a good influence over her.

"Your father is in the Mercantile Library, Eleanor tells me," she added.

"He goes there to study and write, a good deal," Winifred said. "He had to study up a lot for the local

colour of his last book," naturally using the expression she had caught from her father.

Mrs. Howe sat up suddenly. "Why — I thought — Eleanor, what did you tell me about the library?"

"I thought he *was* in the library, mamma, for I know he's there most every day," said heedless Eleanor. "I thought he had something to do with books."

"He has. He writes them," said Winifred, simply.

"My dear, you don't mean to say that your father is Gerald Dent, the novelist, who published 'Disinherited' last winter?"

"Of *course*," said Winifred, wondering.

"Oh, *Eleanor*, you child!" exclaimed Mrs. Howe. "You little goose! But I must say I am proud of a child that has the good taste to select Winifred for a friend, and I hope you'll keep her — always."

"Oh, I'm going to, mamma," said Eleanor, securely. "We're going to be friends, always, like you and Aunt Rosalind."

Winifred's days were brimful now. Her father's name was well established by his last book, "Disinherited," and the succeeding one was quite as popular. He did not make a fortune, for one doesn't make fortunes writing books, but his income was sufficient to live more comfortably, and give Winifred a good

musical education. Mrs. Howe, who was a fine musician herself, and to whom it was a great disappointment that Eleanor cared so little for it, lavished musical treats upon her, insisting to Mr. Dent that it was sheer selfishness on her part, since it was the greatest pleasure to have such a little enthusiast with her. Indeed, Mrs. Howe only longed to have Winifred all to herself, and always told Mr. Dent that if anything ever happened to him, he need never fear for Winifred's future. It was a great delight to Mr. Dent that his little daughter had made such friends, for the companionship of a merry, scatter-brained little thing like Eleanor, was just what Winifred needed, and each child was improved by the other's influence. The friendship left him freer also for the society which he had kept out of, lest Winifred should be lonely, but which he really needed.

Now keep a sharp lookout, and if you ever chance to see, in Central Park or elsewhere in New York, a tall, handsome man, with a little girl holding either hand, one little girl with a quantity of loose, reddish-gold hair, and big, brown eyes, and pink and white skin, and the other with short, black hair, and dancing eyes as black as sloes, or if you see these same two, riding with a sweet-faced, gracious woman, you will know they are Winifred and Eleanor.

And still the wonder lives in Winifred's mind.

"I'm the most *fortunate* child," she often says to her father. "I wonder why. Everything I want just comes to me, always. *Why* is it, father?"

And her father laughs and kisses her, and says he knows but he won't tell.

THE END.

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